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## A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF.

BY MRS OLIPHANT.

### CHAPTER I.

THE day was warm, and there was no shade; out of the olive woods which they had left behind, and where all was soft coolness and freshness, they had emerged into a piece of road widened and perfected by recent improvements till it was as shelterless as a broad street. High walls on one side clothed with the green clinging trails of the mesembryanthemum, with palm-trees towering above, but throwing no shadow below; on the other a low house or two, and more garden walls, leading in a broad curve to the little old walled town, its campanile rising up over the clustered roofs, in which was their home. They had fifteen minutes or more of dazzling sunshine before them ere they could reach any point of shelter.

Ten minutes, or even five, would have been enough for Frances. She could have run along, had she been alone, as like a bird as any human creature could be, being so light and swift and young. But it was very different with her father. He walked but slowly at the best of times; and in the face of the sun at noon, what was to be expected of him? It was part of the strange contrariety of fate, which was against him in whatever he attempted, small or great, that it should be just here, in this broad, open, unavoidable path, that he encountered one of those parties which always made him wroth, and which usually he managed to keep clear of with such dexterity—an English family from one of the hotels.

Tourists from the hotels are always objectionable to residents in a place. Even when the residents are themselves strangers, perhaps, indeed, all the more from that fact, the chance visitors who come to stare and gape at those scenes which the others have appropriated and taken possession of, are insufferable. Mr Waring had lived in the old town of Bordighera for a great number of

years. He had seen the Marina and the line of hotels on the beach created, and he had watched the travellers arriving to take possession of them—the sick people, and the people who were not sick. He had denounced the invasion unceasingly, and with vehemence; he had never consented to it. The Italians about might be complacent, thinking of the enrichment of the neighbourhood, and of what was good for trade, as these prosaic people do; but the English colonist on the Punto could not put up with it. And to be met here, on his return from his walk, by an unblushing band about whom there could be no mistake, was very hard to bear. He had to walk along exposed to the fire of all their unabashed and curious glances, to walk slowly, to miss none, from that of the stout mother to that of the slim governess. In the rear of the party came the papa, a portly Saxon, of the class which, if comparisons could be thought of in so broad and general a sentiment, Mr Waring disliked worst of all—a big man, a rosy man, a fat man, in large easy morning clothes, with a big white umbrella over his head. This last member of the family came at some distance behind the rest. He did not like the sun, though he had been persuaded to leave England in search of it. He was very warm, moist, and in a state of general relaxation, his tidy necktie coming loose, his gloves only half on, his waistcoat partially unbuttoned. It was March, when no doubt a good genuine east wind was blowing at home. At that moment, this traveller almost regretted the east wind.

The Warings were going up-hill towards their abode; the slope was gentle enough, yet it added to the slowness of Mr Waring's pace. All the English party had stared at him, as is the habit of English parties; and indeed he and his daughter

were not unworthy of a stare. But all these gazes came with a cumulation of curiosity to widen the stare of the last comer, who had besides twenty or thirty yards of vacancy in which the indignant resident was fully exposed to his view. Little Frances, who was English enough to stare too, though in a gentlewomanly way, saw a change gradually come, as he gazed, on the face of the stranger. His eyebrows rose up bushy and arched with surprise; his eyelids puckered with the intentness of his stare; his lips dropped apart. Then he came suddenly to a stand-still, and gasped forth the word 'WARING!' in tones of surprise to which capital letters can give but faint expression.

Mr Waring, struck by this exclamation as by a bullet, paused too, as with something of that inclination to turn round which is said to be produced by a sudden hit. He put up his hand momentarily, as if to pull down his broad-brimmed hat over his brows. But in the end he did neither. He stood and faced the stranger with angry energy. 'Well?' he said.

'Dear me, who could have thought of seeing you here. Let me call my wife. She will be delighted.—Mary!—Why, I thought you had gone to the East. I thought you had disappeared altogether. And so did everybody. And what a long time it is, to be sure. You look as if you had forgotten me.'

'I have,' said the other with a supercilious gaze, perusing the large figure from top to toe.

'O come, Waring! Why—Mannering; you can't have forgotten Mannering, a fellow that stuck by you all through. Dear, how it brings up everything, seeing you again! Why, it must be a dozen years ago.—And what have you been doing all this time? Wandering over the face of the earth, I suppose, in all sorts of out-of-the-way places, since nobody has ever fallen in with you before.'

'I am something of an invalid,' said Waring. 'I fear I cannot stand in the sun to answer so many questions. And my movements are of no importance to any one but myself.'

'Don't be so misanthropical,' said the stranger in his large round voice. 'You always had a turn that way. And I don't wonder if you are soured—any fellow would be soured.—Won't you say a word to Mary? She's looking back, wondering with all her might what new acquaintance I've found out here, never thinking it's an old friend.—Hello, Mary!—What's the matter? Don't you want to see her? Why, man alive, don't be so bitter. She and I have always stuck up for you; through thick and thin, we've stuck up for you.—Eh! can't stand any longer? Well, it is hot, isn't it? There's no variety in this confounded climate. Come to the hotel, then—the *Victoria*, down there.'

Waring had passed his interrogator, and was already at some distance, while the other, breath-

less, called after him. He ended, affronted, by another discharge of musketry, which hit the fugitive in the rear. 'I suppose,' the indiscreet inquirer demanded breathlessly, 'that's the little girl?'

Frances had followed with great but silent curiosity this strange conversation. She had not interposed in any way, but she had stood close by her father's side, drinking in every word with keen ears and eyes. She had heard and seen many strange things, but never an encounter like this; and her eagerness to know what it meant was great; but she dared not linger a moment after her father's rapid movement of the hand, and the longer stride than usual, which was all the increase of speed he was capable of. As she had stood still by his side without a question, she now went on, very much as if she had been a delicate little piece of machinery of which he had touched the spring. That was not at all the character of Frances Waring; but to judge by her movements while at her father's side, an outside observer might have thought so. She had never offered any resistance to any impulse from him in her whole life; indeed, it would have seemed to her an impossibility to do so. But these impulses concerned the outside of her life only. She went along by his side with the movement of a swift creature restrained to the pace of a very slow one, but making neither protest nor remark. And neither did she ask any explanation, though she cast many a stolen glance at him as they pursued their way. And for his part he said nothing. The heat of the sun, the annoyance of being thus interrupted, were enough to account for that.

Before they could reach the shelter of their home, there was this broad bit of sunny road, made by one of those too progressive municipalities, thirsting for English visitors and tourists in general, who fill with hatred and horror the old residents in Italy; and then a succession of stony stairs more congenial to the locality, by which, under old archways and through narrow alleys, you got at last to the wider centre of the town, a broad stony piazza, under the shadow of the Bell Tower, the characteristic campanile which was the landmark of the place. Except on one side of the piazza, all here was in grateful shade. Waring's stern face softened a little when he came into these cool and almost deserted streets. Here and there a woman at a doorway; an old man in the deep shadow of an open shop, or booth, unguarded by any window; two or three girls filling their pitchers at the well, but no intrusive tourists or passengers of any kind to break the noonday stillness. The pair went slowly through the little town, and emerged through another old gateway on the further side, where the blue Mediterranean, with all its wonderful shades of colour, and line after line of headland cutting

down into those ethereal tints, stretched out before them ; ending in the haze of the Ligurian Mountains. The scene was enough to take away the breath of one unaccustomed to that blaze of wonderful light, and all the delightful accidents of those purple hills. But this pair were too familiarly acquainted with every line to make any pause. They turned round the sunny height from the gateway, and entered by a deep small door sunk in the wall, which stood high like a great rampart rising from the Punto. This was the outer wall of the palace of the lord of the town, still called *the Palazzo* at Bordighera. Every large house is a palace in Italy ; but the pretensions of this were well founded. The little door by which they entered had been an opening of modern and peaceful times, the state entrance being through a great doorway and court on the inner side. The deep outer wall was pierced by windows only at the height of the second story, on the sea-side, so that the great marble stair up which Waring toiled slowly was very long and fatiguing, as if it led to a mountain top. He reached his rooms breathless, and going in through antechamber and corridor, threw himself into the depths of a large but upright chair. There were no signs of luxury about. It was not one of those hermitages of culture and ease which English recluses make for themselves in the most unlikely places. It was more like a real hermitage ; or, to speak more simply, it was like, what it really was, an apartment in an old Italian house, in a rustic castle, furnished and provided as such a place, in the possession of its natural inhabitants, would be.

The Palazzo was subdivided into a number of habitations, of which the apartment of the Englishman was the most important. It was composed of a suite of rooms facing to the sea, and commanding the entire circuit of the sun ; for the windows on one side were to the east, and at the other the apartment ended in a large loggia, commanding the west and all the glorious sunsets accomplished there. We northerners, who have but a limited enjoyment of the sun, show often a strange indifference to him in the sites and situations of our houses ; but in Italy it is well known that where the sun does not go the doctor goes, and much more regard is shown to the aspect of the house.

The Warings at the worst of that genial climate had little occasion for fire ; they had but to follow the centre of light when he glided out of one room to fling himself more abundantly into another. The Punto is always full in the cheerful rays. It commands everything—air and sea, and the mountains and all their thousand effects of light and shade ; and the Palazzo stands boldly out upon this the most prominent point in the landscape, with the houses of the little town withdrawing on a dozen different levels behind. In the warlike days when no point of vantage which a pirate could seize upon was left undefended or assailable, it is probable that there was no loggia from which to watch the western illuminations. But peace has been so long on the Riviera that the loggia too was antique, the parapet crumbling and gray. It opened from a large room, very lofty, and with much faded decora-

tion on the upper walls and roof, which was the *salone* or drawing-room, beyond which was an anteroom, then a sort of library, a dining-room, a succession of bedchambers ; much space, little furniture, sunshine and air unlimited, and a view from every window which it was worth living to be able to look out upon night and day. This, however, at the moment of which we write was shut out all along the line, the green *persiani* being closed, and nothing open but the loggia, which was still cool and in the shade. The rooms lay in a soft green twilight, cool and fresh ; the doors were open from one to another, affording a long vista of picturesque glimpses.

From where Waring had thrown himself down to rest, he looked straight through over the faded formality of the anteroom with its large old chairs, which were never moved from their place, across his own library, in which there was a glimmer of vellum binding and old gilding, to the table with its white tablecloth, laid out for breakfast in the eating-room. The quiet soothed him after a while, and perhaps the evident preparations for his meal, the large and rotund flask of Chianti which Domenico was placing on the table, the vision of another figure behind Domenico with a delicate dish of mayonnaise in her hands. He could distinguish that it was a mayonnaise, and his angry spirit calmed down. Noon began to chime from the campanile, and Frances came in without her hat and with the eagerness subdued in her eyes. ‘Breakfast is ready, papa,’ she said. She had that look of knowing nothing and guessing nothing beyond what lies on the surface, which so many women have.

She was scarcely to be called a woman, not only because of being so young, but of being so small, so slim, so light, with such a tiny figure, that a stronger breeze than usual would, one could not help thinking, blow her away. Her father was very tall, which made her tiny size the more remarkable. She was not beautiful—few people are to the positive degree ; but she had the prettiness of youth, of round soft contour and peach-like skin, and clear eyes. Her hair was light brown, her eyes dark brown, neither very remarkable ; her features small and clearly cut, as was her figure, no slovenliness or want of finish about any line. All this pleasing exterior was very simple and easily comprehended ; and had but little to do with her, the real Frances, who was not so easy to understand. She had two faces, although there was in her no guile. She had the countenance she now wore, as it were for daily use—a countenance without expression, like a sunny cheerful morning in which there is neither care nor fear—the countenance of a girl calling papa to breakfast, very punctual, knowing that nobody could reproach her as being half of a minute late, or having a hair or a ribbon a hair’s-breadth out of place. That such a girl should have ever suspected anything, feared anything—except perhaps gently that the mayonnaise was not to papa’s taste—was beyond the range of possibilities ; or that she was acquainted with anything in life beyond the simple routine of regular hours and habits, the sweet and gentle bond of the ordinary, which is the best rule of young lives.

Frances Waring had sometimes another face. That profile of hers was not so clearly cut for nothing; nor were her eyes so lucid only to perceive the outside of existence. In her room, during the few minutes she spent there, she had looked at herself in her old-fashioned dim glass, and seen a different creature. But what that was, or how it was, must show itself further on. She led the way into the dining-room, the trimmest composed little figure, all England embodied—though she scarcely remembered England—in the self-restrained and modest toilet of a little girl accustomed to be cared for by women well instructed in the niceties of feminine costume; and yet she had never had any one to take counsel with except an Italian maid-of-all-work, who loved the brightest primitive colours, as became her race. Frances knew so few English people that she had not even the admiration of surprise at her success. Those she did know took it for granted that she got her pretty sober suits, her simple unelaborate dresses, from some very excellent dressmaker at 'home,' not knowing that she did not know what home was.

Her father followed her, as different a figure as imagination could suggest. He was very tall, very thin, with long legs and stooping shoulders, his hair in limp locks, his shirt-collar open, a velvet coat—looking as entirely adapted to the locality, the conventional right man in the right place, as she was the woman. A gloomy look, which was habitual to him, a fretful longitudinal pucker in his forehead, the hollow lines of ill-health in his cheeks, disguised the fact that he was, or had been, a handsome man; just as his extreme spareness and thinness made it difficult to believe that he had also been a very powerful one. Nor was he at all old, save in the very young eyes of his daughter, to whom forty-five was venerable. He might have been an artist or a poet of a misanthropical turn of mind; though, when a man has chronic asthma, misanthropy is unnecessary to explain his look of pain and fatigue and disgust with the outside world. He walked languidly, his shoulders up to his ears, and followed Frances to the table, and sat down with that air of dissatisfaction which takes the comfort out of everything. Frances either was inaccessible to this kind of discomfort, or so accustomed to it that she did not feel it. She sat serenely opposite to him, and talked of indifferent things.

'Don't take the mayonnaise, if you don't like it, papa; there is something else coming that will perhaps be better. Mariuccia does not at all pride herself upon her mayonnaise.'

'Mariuccia knows very little about it; she has not even the sense to know what she can do best.' He took a little more of the dish, partly out of contradiction, which was the result which Frances hoped.

'The lettuce is so crisp and young, that makes it a little better,' she said with the air of a connoisseur.

'A little better is not the word; it is very good,' he said fretfully; then added with a slight sigh: 'Everything is better for being young.'

'Except people, I know. Why does young mean good with vegetables and everything else, and silly only when it is applied to people?—though it can't be helped, I know.'

'That is one of your metaphysical questions,' he said with a slight softening of his tone. 'Perhaps because of human jealousy. We all like to discredit what we haven't got, and most people you see, are no longer young.'

'Oh, do you think so, papa? I think there are more young people than old people.'

'I suppose you are right, Fan; but they don't count for so much, in the way of opinion at least.—What has called forth these sage remarks?'

'Only the lettuce,' she said with a laugh. Then, after a pause: 'For instance, there were six or seven children in the party we met to-day, and only two parents.'

'There are seldom more than two parents, my dear.'

She had not looked up when she made this careless little speech, and yet there was a purpose in it, and a good deal of keen observation through her drooped eyelashes. She received his reply with a little laugh. 'I did not mean that, papa; but that six or seven are a great deal more than two, which of course you will laugh at me for saying. I suppose they were all English?'

'I suppose so. The father—if he was the father—certainly was English.'

'And you knew him, papa?'

'He knew me, which is a different thing.'

Then there was a little pause. The conversation between the father and daughter was apt to run in broken periods. He very seldom originated anything. When she found a subject upon which she could interest him, he would reply, to a certain limit; and then the talk would drop. He was himself a very silent man, requiring no outlet of conversation; and when he refused to be interested, it was a task too hard for Frances to lead him into speech. She on her side was full of a thousand unsatisfied curiosities, which for the most part were buried in her own bosom. In the meantime, Domenico made the circle of the table with the new dish, and his step and a question or two from his master were all the remarks that accompanied the meal. Mr Waring was something of a *gourmet*, but at the same time he was very temperate, a conjunction which is favourable to fine eating. His table was delicately furnished with dishes almost infinitesimal in quantity, but superlative in quality; and he ate his dainty light repast with gravity and slowly, as a man performs what he feels to be one of the most important functions of his life.

'Tell Mariuccia that a few drops from a fresh lemon would have improved this *ragoût*—but a very fresh lemon.'

'Yes, Excellency, *freschissimo*,' said Domenico with solemnity.

In the household, generally nothing was so important as the second breakfast, except, indeed, the dinner, which was the climax of the day. The gravity of all concerned, the little solemn movement round the white-covered table in the still soft shade of the atmosphere, with those green *persianas* shutting out all the sunshine without, and the brown old walls, bare of any decorations throwing up the group, made a curious picture. The walls were quite bare, the floor brown and polished, with only a square of carpet round the table; but the roof and cornices were gilt and painted with tarnished gilding and half-obliterated pictures. Opposite to Frances was

a blurred figure of a cherub with a finger on his lip. She looked up at this faint image as she had done a hundred times, and was silent. He seemed to command the group, hovering over it like a little tutelary god.

## PRISON LITERATURE.

THE prison, which was intended for the lawless, has been the birthplace of ennobling as well as striking literature, whose claim to be brought into prominence is all the greater because it has usually been produced under circumstances the least favourable to it, and not rarely by men of whom the world was not worthy.

The *Consolation of Philosophy*, the work of a Latin philosopher of the fifth century, may well stand first on the list. Charles Kingsley calls it 'a noble work,' and Gibbon, 'a golden volume not unworthy the leisure of Plato or Tully.' Until the fourteenth century, it ranked with the best classics; and at times, even amongst scholars, it was placed next only to the Bible. Granted that the period during which it obtained this exalted reputation was marked by literary poverty, it is surely not a little remarkable that such a book came into existence in a prison. Its author, Anicius Manlius Severinus Boëthius, was throughout the greater part of this time claimed by the Church as saint and martyr, the friend of St Benedict, the instrument of a miracle, and the author of several theological treatises. Appointed 'Master of the Offices' in the court of Theodoric, king of the Goths, who had made Rome the seat of his government, his purse, as of old, was open to the poor, his eloquence was employed on behalf of the oppressed, and his influence was exercised with Theodoric on behalf of his country, in a manner which cannot but have saved it from much misery. His fearless and uncompromising love of justice compelled him to speak out against the unscrupulous misgovernment of the barbarians around him. This aroused their wrath, and their opportunity came. Albinus, a senator, having been charged with treason, Boëthius chivalrously became his defender; the reward of which was to find himself, along with his father-in-law, Symmachus, placed under the same accusation. The evidence produced against him was letters, which he declares to have been forged. But Theodoric's mind had been poisoned, and so the philosopher was doomed to die—a sentence which was cruelly carried out.

The Reformation in England produced many men of literary capacity and learning, but few of them could have produced such work in prison as did John Fryth. Suspected of the Lutheran heresy soon after he was brought from Cambridge to Oxford by Wolsey, he was allowed to escape to Germany. There he associated himself with Tyndale, and sent forth a reply to Sir Thomas More's *Supplication of Souls* and to two works in defence of purgatory by Bishop Fisher

and Mr Rastall. Returning to England soon afterwards, he had the best proof of the power of the pen he had thus wielded, for Sir Thomas More, who was the Chancellor, found a place for him in the Tower. Here he wrote a treatise on the Eucharist, which was destined to be replied to by the fagots of the executioner. It was extracted from him by one Holt, a tailor, who professed great anxiety for his instructions, but who probably had much greater anxiety to serve More, for the treatise soon found its way to the Chancellor, who sent forth a brief reply to it. Fryth's rejoinder, considering that it was written without books and in prison, must always be regarded as a remarkable effort, including in its arguments, as it does, the testimony of the Fathers. The bishops handed him over to the civil authority for death by fire. It is satisfactory to know that the action of the bishops, and the martyrdom by which it was followed, were not indorsed by the country. Parliament almost immediately passed an Act which made it illegal for bishops to proceed *ex officio* against heretics.

As the long struggle waged by William of Orange against the power of Spain drew to its close, the silent Prince lost one of his bravest soldiers in the capture of De la Noue, who was made a prisoner in an action near Ingelmunster. His personal worth was attested by Parma, who, when offered Count Egmont and De Selles in exchange for him, said that he could not give a lion for two sheep. Yet, this lion-hearted warrior was consigned to the donjon keep of the castle of Limburg, where an aperture in the roof admitted a little light and much rain, snow, and wind, whilst the floor was the home of rats, toads, and other obnoxious vermin. Here he was immured for five years, and here he composed his political and military discourses, and made annotations upon Plutarch and other works.

The prisons of the French Revolution could not be crowded with their doomed thousands, representative of every section of the community, without producing a literature quite distinctly its own. But that such a work as Madame Roland's *Mémoires* was begun and ended in one of these houses of arrest is one of the extraordinary phenomenal facts of literature, and proves its author to have been a most remarkable woman. Face to face with death, she reproduces her life from the days of childhood, with a precision and fullness that are equally surprising. The horrors endured by her country at times almost overwhelm her, but fear of personal peril or danger is unknown to her. She remains to the last an 'angel of light, pure, sweet, generous, and pitiful. Without books and under the surveillance of jailers, her resources are exhaustless. 'I must despatch this book,' she says, 'to be free to go on with another.' But the material so crowds upon her that she can scarcely get away from it. 'To follow things thus step by step, I should have to write a long work, for which I have not the time left to live.' When they took her to the scaffold, they also took Lamarche. His dejection made her his

consoler, and then she asked to die first, to show him how peacefully this could be done. Before the guillotine could do its work, she asked for a pen 'to write the strange thoughts that were rising in her.' They refused her this last request, and the world is so much the poorer; but let it at least be thankful for the woman and for her prison *Mémoires*.

When, in 1716, Voltaire was thrown into the Bastille on suspicion of having libelled the government, they were afraid to allow him either pen or paper; but he there planned and in part composed the *Henriade*, one of the greatest of the very few great epics of the world. Robert Southwell, the Jesuit priest, who was three times imprisoned, ten times racked, and at last executed, wrote his two longest poems in prison, namely, *St Peter's Complaint* and *Mary Magdalene's Funeral Tears*. In his Autobiography, Leigh Hunt, referring to his imprisonment of 1813-15, says, 'I read verses without end, and wrote almost as many.' Sir Walter Raleigh wrote his *History of the World* in the Tower of London; and it was whilst a captive in the prison-fortress of Ham that Napoleon III put together his *Napoleonic Ideas*. Rossel, who resigned the post of chief of the corps of engineers at Nevers to join the Commune during the last struggle of France with Germany, because it did 'not number among its adherents the generals guilty of capitulation,' and was arrested by the party he joined, and finally shot when Versailles became triumphant, occupied his prison hours in committing to paper his thoughts, theories, and experiences. Some of his descriptions throw a lurid light on the revolutionary leaders, and make it quite easy for one to understand how rapid was his disenchantment with the men from whom he had hoped so much.

The literature of the prison is in other respects exceedingly varied and suggestive. It was whilst immured in the Tower of London that Penn composed *No Cross, No Crown*. During his imprisonment, Savonarola wrote Commentaries on the thirty-first and fifty-first Psalms, as also his *Rule for a good Christian Life*. This last work was written at the request of his jailer, who, observant of his sanctity, had asked for a help to attain to it himself. Very beautiful, too, was the life of Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, who, whilst acting as a missionary in India, was thrown into prison by the governor of Tranquebar. Not only were books refused him wherewith to continue his translation of the New Testament, but even pen and ink were forbidden, and a guard set over him to prevent any communication with the outer world. When, therefore, he one morning found writing materials on his table, he concluded that some angel had supplied his want; hence he declared on the title-page of *The Christian Life* and *The Christian Teacher*, which he proceeded to compose, that they were written under the immediate direction of God. In the very year in which Ziegenbalg had been born (1683), the Hon. Algernon Sidney was beheaded for alleged complicity in the Ryehouse plot. Whilst in prison, he wrote a *résumé* of his life and trial, which production is a strong testimony both to his patriotism and honour.

If we have said nothing yet of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, by far the most remarkable book which

can be classed under prison literature, it is because it is so well known and so universally accessible, while the circumstances under which it was written are familiar to all.

### MY EXTRAORDINARY FRIEND.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

I WAS only an assistant-master in a private school in the south of England, but my position was a very comfortable one. My salary was small, but so were my expenses. I had sufficient leisure time. The boys were as a body of a very good class, and best, perhaps, of all, I agreed thoroughly with the head-master, who treated me rather as a companion and an equal, than in the manner usually associated with the profession of usher. I believe I was popular with the boys because I entered with zest into their sports and pursuits; and having been educated at a large public school myself, I understood them, and possessed that tact in treatment and management which so few of the many men who groan at the slavery of 'cub-taming' seem to possess. Naturally, I did not intend to devote the remainder of my life to cub-taming; but I was a stern believer in the old axiom, that 'All things come to him who waits,' probably because I had a very tangible something to wait for in the shape of a little fortune compiled by an old Indian relative, who, humanly speaking, could not possibly live very many years longer.

I was popular amongst the boys, yet I think the only real friend I had amongst them was a young Russian named Ivan Dolouski. I believe I took a fancy to him simply because no one else did. He was a very extraordinary being; a very intellectual giant with the frame of a boy of sixteen. Why he was shunned by his schoolfellows I could never satisfactorily make out, unless it was because his ways were mysterious; because he took no part in the active healthful sports of the others; did not know the difference between square-leg and cover-point, or between a drop-kick and a punt; and perhaps because he was reputed to be 'awfully' clever—the word 'awfully' in his case being taken in its literal, and not its colloquial sense.

The few boys who had been able to get a peep into the desk, which he kept, as a rule, rigidly locked up, declared that it was a regular engine-room inside. Whilst his mates were reading or skylarking during the hours of indoor leisure, he would be absorbed in the gloom of this desk, hammering, tinkering, sawing, nailing; now and then creating a terrible smell, and more than once causing a small explosion. He spent all his pocket-money—and he had plenty—in odd bits of iron, tubes, models of engines, mysterious substances wrapped in paper. In fact, he was as unlike the average English schoolboy of his own age as could be imagined, and was regarded much in the same way as a wise-man or necromancer of the middle ages was regarded by the ignorant populace, saving in one respect—no one dared to interfere with him. Quiet and harmless when left alone, forbearing even when chaffed and taunted, if he was roused by a more than ordinarily bold

move on the part of his schoolfellows, such as a grab at his keys, or the sudden plunging of a head into his desk, his black eyes would flash, his brow would contract into an almost diabolical frown, and, no matter what weapon was within reach, or who was present, he would use it with the frenzy of a madman. Hence, he was an object of awe and suspicion, as well as of ridicule, to the school.

But to me he was different. I don't think there was much in common between us, for I had no taste for mechanics; but I used to speak to him, and try to take an interest in his pursuits. I used to take his part against the young 'bulldogs' who were everlastingly yapping and snapping about him; and he would refer to me upon scientific questions in a manner which only served to bring out the astonishing ignorance of one who was supposed to be his teacher, but which bound him closely to me. In the school, he was sullen, silent, morose. At my desk, at my side in the playground, in my private room, he was bright, enthusiastic, and cheerful.

But there was another bond of unity between us. Ivan evidently came of wealthy and patrician parents. Every other Saturday afternoon, a magnificently appointed carriage drove up to the playground from the neighbouring watering-place of Hythe, and the word was passed that 'young Bear's' friends had come for him. In the carriage there were usually an elderly lady and a girl of eighteen. As I was invariably on playground duty during Saturday afternoons, I became in some sort acquainted with Madame Dolomski and her daughter Olga, especially as I had generally to be employed as an agent between them and Ivan; for if the latter happened to be engaged upon some interesting experiment or new problem, the most endearing of maternal messages could not drag him away; and even I, with all my influence, had sometimes to return to the carriage without him.

My conversation was chiefly with the elder lady; but my regards, I must say, were entirely for the younger. She was, as I have said, about eighteen, the possessor of one of those open, smiling faces which make us resent all that cynics and satirists have said against woman, a face set in an aureole of clustering curls; of a figure which some might say was too square and full developed to be within the category of feminine delicacy and grace, but which I rightly estimated to be the outcome of cold water and fresh air; of faultless hands and feet; and, perhaps best of all, of the sweetest and most musical of voices. I don't suppose she would have been looked at in a Belgravian drawing-room; but to me, a poor schoolmaster, shut up during nine months of the twelve within the school-boundary walls, who seldom saw a fairer face than that of Betty Housemaid, she seemed an angel. And although I was a dreamy young enthusiast of four-and-twenty, I knew more than to believe that any but a kind, good heart could be enshrined within so attractive a frame.

Once smitten, I began to regard these Saturday visits as epochs in my existence, and was always hovering about the gate at about the usual hour of the carriage's arrival; and I do not believe I had ever passed two more wretched ten minutes in my life than once when I happened

to be at the other end of the ground stopping a fight, and the French master played my rôle to the occupants of the carriage; and another time when Madame arrived alone. I suppose Ivan must have told his mother and sister of his respect and affection for me, for not only were they invariably polite and gracious, but they asked me to dine with them at Hythe one evening; and from their surroundings I could see that they were very great people. I believe the French master could have eaten me when I returned that night.

Of course it was all very absurd, although there might have been something romantic in the love of a humble usher with a hundred a year for the daughter of a Russian colonel with a 'Von' before his name; but there it was. I found Olga so amiable, so intelligent, so interested in all that I told her about English school-life and traditions and pastimes and eccentricities, that I am afraid when the carriage came, I did not pay one half the attention to the good Madame that I paid her daughter.

My joy may be imagined when one Saturday the carriage came with Olga alone in it. I do not know what I said or how I looked during the half-hour I stood beside it; but I remember that I did not hurry to execute the usual errand of fetching Ivan until the expiration of that time. There was not a trace of coquetry about Olga's bearing towards me; but I impressed myself with the notion that she reciprocated my passion, and built for myself castles in the air which in extravagance surpassed the wildest dreams of romancers.

The more I saw of Ivan, the less I understood him. When I watched him amongst his schoolfellows there was a set scowl on his face, and an ugly line on each side of his mouth, which proclaimed that his hand was against every one's, and every one's hand against his. When he saw me, the dark, almost truculent face would light up, the bad lines would fade from his mouth, and a smile would break out, which made him look positively handsome. Yet, strong as was my influence over him, I never could get him to assimilate himself to the surroundings of his life, and when I suggested cricket or football, he would answer: 'Mr Cormell, such sports are for barbarians, not for thinkers.'

I gazed at my young thinker of sixteen, as well I might; but he was unmoved and serious.

One day—a wet day, and the school consequently confined within doors; I was writing at my desk—I rather think it was an ode to my charmer, when I heard above the din of laughing chattering restless boys, a tremendous commotion at the other end of the room, scuffling, cries of 'Young blackguard!' 'Beastly young foreign cad!' 'Coward,' and so forth. I could not see much beyond the agitated waves of boys' heads; but instinct told me that Ivan was there or thereabouts. I cast away the gentle look of the amorous composer, put on my magisterial air, and went to the scene of disturbance. Arrived there, I saw Mr Ivan standing with his back to the door like a wild beast at bay, with an open pocket-knife of large size in his hand; and in the midst of a knot of white-faced boys sat one whom I knew to be a frequent tormentor of the young Russian—Quayle Major by name, his coat

off, and bleeding profusely from a wound in the shoulder.

I asked what the matter was. As usual, nobody answered. Probably every one imagined that verbal explanation was unnecessary, seeing that the cause was so patent. However, I insisted upon an answer, so a big boy stepped forward and said : 'Please, sir, Quayle Major wanted to see what young Bear—I mean Dolomski—was up to in his desk. Dolomski wouldn't let him. Quayle made a dash with his arm, and young Bear chopped it into it with a knife.'

Fully aware that my young protégé had received far greater provocation than was stated in the words of the ingenuous speaker, and with half an inclination to remark that it served Quayle Major right for interfering with the business of other people, I of course felt that such a state of affairs could not be tolerated in an English school. If Dolomski had caught Quayle a blow with his fist, there would have been a fight then or afterwards, and an end to the whole affair ; but when knife-using began, something not far short of murder might be the result.

I sent Quayle off to the matron, and told Dolomski to follow me up to my desk.

'Ivan,' I said, 'don't you know that this sort of thing can't be allowed in an English school ?'

'Don't they know that a boy's desk is his private property ?' he answered. 'What harm was I doing to them ? If any of them were writing a letter home, should I go and look over to see what they were saying ? No. Very well. I've served Quayle Major out. I've stood a lot from him, and I wouldn't stand any more ; and the next time I'll strike harder, and in another place.'

A murmur of disgust from the boys assembled round my desk followed this declaration. Dolomski smiled at it, and added : 'Just any of you try it on, that's all.'

'Come, come,' I said sternly, 'that will do. Don't make matters worse.' And I led him from the room amidst a perfect storm of yells and hoots and hisses.

The story of course reached the head-master's ears ; the result being, after a long consultation between us, that the only course open was to have Ivan removed as soon as possible.

On the day of his departure, he came to me, and holding out his hand, said : 'Mr Cormell, you've been the only friend I've had amongst this crew of savages. You think I'm a brute ; but I shan't forget your kindness. Perhaps you may want a friend some day ; perhaps I shall be your friend some day.'

The carriage came. Madame and Olga were in it. Olga was crying ; probably at the disgraceful termination to her brother's school career. Because she would not see me again, I flattered myself. At anyrate, my parting with Madame and her daughter and Ivan was of the most tender description. Madame, who spoke but indifferent English, said : 'Good-bye, Meester Cormell. You have been one good, kind friend to my poor boy here. I feel—Olga here feel dat we are say Good-bye to an old friend. I cannot know if we shall meet again. Perhaps yes ; perhaps no. But if you do find you in St Petersburg at any day, do you make a call chez

Colonel Dolomski, Nevski Prospect, and you shall see how glad we shall be to see you.'

Olga did not say anything, but sobbed bitterly. As for me, I murmured out a few commonplaces about only having done my duty and so forth, and stood fidgeting like a great booby, filled with an insane desire to jump into the carriage and go off with them. Then Ivan shook hands with me, actually with tears in his eyes ; the carriage sped away, and I felt that I was alone in the world, separated from all I held most dear in it.

There was a rush to see the interior of Ivan's desk after he had gone. I didn't know what the boys expected to find ; but they raised the lid as carefully as if they were opening an infernal machine ; and after all, there was nothing but a scrap of newspaper describing the attempt to blow up the steamer *Mosel* in Bremen harbour, a treatise on the Hidden Forces of Nature, a tattered chemical book, and a few bits of iron and steel.

#### SOME INDIAN HERBS AND POISONS.

No country is better supplied with medicinal as well as poisonous herbs than India. Along way-sides and ditches, harmless-looking plants flourish abundantly, yet possessing some strange, and some of the most deadly qualities. It is one of the mysteries of creation how side by side with plants and cereals the most valuable and necessary to life, nature has also scattered abundantly plants so deadly ; as if along with an element of good, there must also be one of evil. But it is only during a long residence in the country that the ordinary Anglo-Indian grows into acquaintance with this feature of the vegetable world around him, which previously he has only recognised as rank, troublesome weeds, intruding where not wanted, and having to be cut down and cast away. Many if not all of these become convertible, however, according as they are used, into some medicinal purpose or other ; as if, after all, even the most seemingly useless or noxious have their value, if properly treated.

One of the most common plants by ditch-side or cactus-hedge is the *datoora*, with its large white flower, and leaves resembling the hollyhock, and now well known as a valuable medicine for asthma, for which its leaves are used in the shape of cigars or 'tobacco.' The seeds, on the other hand, are a subtle and powerful poison, in small quantities causing temporary insanity, and in large, either permanent injury to the brain or death. By an accident, I became aware of the peculiar properties of the *datoora*. A robbery occurred in a neighbouring village, and an alarm spread that this had been effected through the agency of *datoora*-poisoning by an organised gang of robber-poisoners. It seemed the gang had put up at the village the night before in the guise of travellers, and succeeded in getting on friendly terms with one of the wealthiest families there, whom they entertained to a feast of sweetmeats—the only eatable in which different castes may join. As night advanced, the family allowed them to put up in their veranda ; and when the village was sunk in sleep, the effects of the poisoned sweetmeats gradually placed the house and all it contained at the mercy of the

robbers. Next morning, when the hue and cry arose in the village, and native inspectors, *thannah-dars*, and constables had arrived from far and near to investigate the case—and turn to what profit they could the opportunity—they found the family of eight lying helpless and dangerously ill, semi-idiotic, and unconscious of what had occurred or was going on around them. The house had been ransacked, and money dug out of the ground (the natives' purse) amounting to about thirty thousand rupees; and the suspicion of datoora-poisoning was confirmed. No trace of the gang could be found, in spite of the official raids made by the police, and the levy of blackmail on those who could afford to 'pay' to escape suspicion. The family gradually recovered to find themselves almost penniless, the time they had been under the poison being a blank to them.

A sad case of datoora-poisoning occurred some time after this. My gardener's child, a fine little fellow of two years, whom I had often seen in the garden, had swallowed a few datoora seeds while playing with some children by the roadside. This was first suspected by his parents from some of the seeds being found in his hand; and after being taken home, the fatal result too soon confirmed their fears. From being in perfect health, in a few hours he was a memory of the past; and one of the saddest sights was the distracted grief of the parents for their only son. Sadder if anything was the fact of the body being kept for three days in the hot weather under the shade of a large sacrificial banyan tree close by, covered only with a light cloth and some leaves, waiting till the *thannahdar* of the nearest station could find leisure to come and report on it before burial, while the mother was rushing off at all hours of the night and day to take another look at her dead child.

Though the plant is to be found everywhere, this is the only case I know of accidental poisoning from datoora. The native belief, however, is that it is commonly used by professional robbers instead of the terrible *roomal* (handkerchief-strangling) of the old Thugs.

Another plant, called the *madar*, from two to four feet high, grows in isolated groups along roadsides and in open sunny places. It is soft and branching, with broad, thick, dark-green leaves covered with down, and large white waxen flowers faintly tinged with pink towards the centre. The first time I discovered it to have a curative value was on getting a sprained thumb through an upset out of my dogcart, causing swelling of the whole hand with severe pain. While trying in vain the ordinary home resources, my bearer, Jhoti, who stood a stoical witness of the ejaculations and contortions which the pain and failure of remedies elicited, at length suggested the madar leaf. Glad of any chance, though placing little faith in his nostrum, I agreed readily enough; and he soon appeared with a madar leaf, which he applied hot to the hand and tied firmly round. The relief seemed almost to begin from the moment of application; and in a quarter of an hour the pain had nearly subsided, while the hand felt more elastic with the rapid decrease of the swelling. In an hour or two there was no perception of pain left, and the hand felt much like the other, except for a little stiffness.

Keeping on the leaf, by his advice, for twenty-four hours, with one or two fresh changes during that time, there appeared afterwards a minute crop of watery pustules, which itched for a day or two, and then disappeared. No trace of pain or swelling remained. After such an experience, my incredulity in native remedies was somewhat shaken, and the plant, which had hitherto seemed but a useless weed, now rose into new interest. The hurry of the native for his madar leaf, his neem-tree leaf or bark for poultices, his castor-leaf, &c. for sprains and swellings, now savoured less to me of native simplicity, and inspired a desire to test their remedies before condemning them. On other occasions I have used the madar leaf with the same result, often wondering whether its efficacy were known to our medical faculty, or ever tested for employment in a wider and more scientific sense.

But it is the *milk* of the madar which, like the poppy, contains its strangest and most powerful property, and exudes abundantly on the slightest scratch of its succulent leaf or stem. When dried in the sun, the milk becomes hard and brittle. The natives profess to use it for any obstinate sore, especially in the nostril, and it was when used for this ostensible purpose, that I witnessed its effects among my servants, caused either from absorption in the blood or accidental swallowing. Finding the *khansamah* absent one evening from duty at dinner, and the *masalchies* arrayed in his *pugri* officiating for him, I learned that he was in a very bad way, from accidentally swallowing some of the madar milk, which he had applied to a sore in his nostril. With some fear, from the description given, that he might be poisoned, and as he was an old and valued servant, I left dinner and went to see him. He was sitting in front of the cooking-house, with his face buried in his hands in an attitude of the deepest dejection, from which nothing could rouse him or elicit a word of answer to my inquiries. In eight or ten minutes, the first change I noticed was a slight movement of the head to one side and a distinct leer at his fellow-servants who were standing by. This was repeated in a few seconds, and again at lessening intervals, accompanied by sounds of suppressed chuckling, as if the whole affair were a grand joke which he was playing at the expense of those present. Shortly, the leers, which expressed the most intense mirth, developed into bursts of laughter loud and ecstatic, with looks of indescribable enjoyment, and I began to doubt whether, after all, we were not being fooled. The 'blowing-up,' however, which I began to give him received no notice—if anything, it seemed but to increase his merriment; but while I yet stood by, the fits of laughter grew less violent, the merriment decreased, soon ceased altogether, and the fit of dejection supervened. This lasted for about a quarter of an hour, and then the hilarious mood gradually came on as before, but always of less duration than the depressed mood. The paroxysms continued for some hours, till at last the man fell into a deep sleep. Next morning, he was at his work as usual, none the worse, looking fresh as ever, but without any recollection of his exhibition the night before.

As on several occasions I had found one or

other of the servants in the same state, I began to wonder whether it was 'sores in the nostril,' or whether the drug had not been taken to produce the effect I had witnessed. The inquiries I made brought no confirmation of the suspicion, or showed that the drug was known or used for that purpose. However that may be, the frequent recurrence of the accident with the same individuals, and on so improbable a pretence, forced the inference that the madar was used as an intoxicant. One peculiarity of it was that highly exciting or intoxicating though it seemed, there was no visible reaction of nervous depression, disordered stomach, &c., as in the case of intoxicating liquors. The terrible effect of larger quantities on the brain, on which it seems specially to act, may be imagined.

It is stated by the natives as a familiar fact, that if a probe is formed from a mixture of the madar milk with a pounded ruttee-seed—a recognised weight of the country used by jewellers—dried and hardened in the sun, and if the skin be pricked with this and the point left, death will follow imperceptibly and painlessly in two or three days, leaving no trace of the cause medically or otherwise but the faintest speck like a mosquito bite where the skin was probed.

The wild *ganja* grows profusely wherever it is permitted, and somewhat like the home nettle without the sting, its flower is small and insignificant. Though very different in appearance from the cultivated *ganja*—the *Cannabis Indica* of the pharmacopœia and famous *hashish* of the East—its intoxicating effects are nearly similar, except that the *ganja* proper is less injurious to the system, and is therefore correspondingly prized. This difference between wild and cultivated plants is seen to a stronger extent even among cereals. The wild rice, or that which has sown itself from a previous crop, if in good ground, looks like the cultivated in every respect, rich and heavy, and is really equally good; but the moment it is touched with the hook, the grains shed themselves into the water in which it has grown, and are lost. A different peculiarity is found in the *kodo*—a small grain like turnip-seed, much grown in dry soil, and with a peculiar pleasant flavour—the self-sown or wild crop of which, though easily gathered, and undistinguishable in appearance from the cultivated, yet causes giddiness when used for food, and is often fraudulently mixed with the cultivated. In noting this difference between wild and cultivated grains, one realises indeed that the bread we live by must be toiled for. The cultivated *ganja* is somewhat like the caraway plant, but stronger and more leafy; and while the wild *ganja* has a strong pungent smell, the cultivated is odourless. Being a government monopoly, it is subject to a high duty, is rarely grown, and owing to its expense, the wild *ganja* is often made to do duty for it. At the same time, the *ganja* proper can always be bought at the rural bazaars, while a good deal is understood to change hands *sub rosa*, which accounts for its reaching the poorer classes.

A confirmed *ganja*-smoker was a Bengali baboo (English bookkeeper) I had, whose weakness came to my knowledge through a quarrel he had with the Persian accountant. The latter mentioned as an instance of the baboo's moral degradation that not only was he a *ganja*-smoker, but had fallen

so low as to use the common *ganja* of the ditches. True enough, one day I saw a large supply of the dried leaf on a shelf, which he had inadvertently left behind. He was an active writer, however, and must have used the drug abstemiously, as it neither interfered with his work nor showed the usual signs of havoc in the face. Whether the continued use of the *ganja* incapacitated him from discriminating between his own property and another's, I cannot say, but for this reason I had to part with him, which also accounted for his losing his previous situation.

Another of his class whom I was unfortunate enough to have later in the same post, so yielded to the allurements of the drug, that latterly he rarely appeared except in a semi-muddled, dreamy state; his shrivelled yellow face, blear eyes as of a film drawn over them, and cracked voice, though he was a young man, showing the lengths he was going and the terrible havoc it was making of him. Premature age had already come upon him, the excitement and visions of a few years of the *ganja* having condensed into them the measure of a lifetime. I had also to part with him from incapacity caused by his habit.

The next of those around me whom I discovered to be a worshipper of the weed was the gardener. He had been with me at the same time as the latter baboo, and had turned a secluded corner of the garden to account to supply both his own and the baboo's needs in the way of *ganja*, with perhaps a surplus for the bazaar. He was an old, tall, lean man, with shrivelled face, but clear strong eyes, and wiry and strong, with an amount of activity in him which got him over as much work in an hour as took many younger men three. Whether the *ganja* had anything to do with his long-sustained energy is doubtful, but he used to assert that it was that gave strength to his old age and enabled him to work as he did.

Once I had occasion to use the *ganja* medicinally in the shape of some of the extract, sent to me by a bachelor friend, prepared by him—as he said—according to a well-known pharmacopœia. The dose I took was ten drops, just before setting out for a neighbouring bungalow where I was expected to spend the evening. During dinner, I became aware of an increasing risibility at the merest trifles, causing surprise especially to some young ladies present, who I could see put it down to the sparkling lager-beer. This tendency increased as the evening advanced; and though conscious of the figure I was making, I felt powerless to exercise the necessary control. After bidding adieu to my friends, as I mounted my horse in front of the veranda, suddenly the whole place, the familiar bungalow, walks, shrubberies, all seemed changed, and only the voices of my friends remained the same. The transformation was even greater as I rode homewards through the woods and quiet villages asleep in the moonlight. Now I seemed to be in Spain, acting the hero of the *Romance of War*; then I seemed to be shooting over the moors of Scotland; and from one part of the world to another was but the flash of a moment. Now the pale moonlight showed all the vegetation crisp and sparkling with hoar-frost, or covered with snow; while the moon herself appeared a dull yellow speck in the

heavens. The whole way home I found myself for ever diverging from the well-known road into bypaths ; and it was only after the *sycce*, who trotted beside me, had brought back the horse for the twentieth time, that I saw the necessity of taking his advice and dropping the reins on the horse's neck, to trust to the surer guidance of his instinct. At times, with a strong effort, I endeavoured to recall my whereabouts ; but it was only for an instant, and the memory was gone, to be replaced by the unreal. At length, after a period that seemed an age, though only extending over a ride of four miles, I reached my bungalow, the sight of which was the first thing that began to bring back reality. Getting into an easy-chair, with the lamplight swimming dim and yellow before me, I began to reflect with some alarm that I was suffering from an overdose of ganja. Though drowsy, I dreaded to sleep ; so, drinking off a strong cup of tea, I resolved to keep awake till the effects wore off. Reading and staring at the lamp in turn was all I remembered, till I awoke next morning quite well, and without the least reaction from the night's experience. Considering the different scenes I was transported to, all of a gorgeous and fairylike nature, and minutely remembered, I could easily understand the prevalent belief that it was the ganja that gave birth to the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*.

The natives chiefly use ganja spiced for the hookah, or as an infusion for drinking, and much more so than appears on the surface. From long continuance or excess, it is a frequent cause of insanity, which may pass away on discontinuing it, or leave more or less permanent imbecility. Medicinally, it does not seem to be used by the natives, though the wild ganja is used as a medicine for cattle.

Akin to the ganja is the poppy, whose sheets of white flowers surrounding every village in the cold season form one of the prettiest features of the landscape ; and which, being a government monopoly, supplying a large share of the revenue, is extensively cultivated in India. The richest portions of land—namely, those closest to the houses—are always allotted to it ; and though a most laboured crop from beginning to end, in the careful weedings and incisures and gatherings of the opium from each separate bulb—from which the milk or opium exudes—it is, even at the fractional price fixed by government, by far the most paying crop to the native. Like the ganja, it is much more used than is superficially seen, especially in towns and by Moslems (of both sexes) of the upper class, though there prevails among natives generally a sort of dread of it, and stigma attaching to the eaters, as if its dangers were fully known and appreciated. The facility of obtaining it illegally where it is universally cultivated is obviously great. Here and there, a prematurely sharpened and haggard face, unintelligible to others, may owe its cause to this. Opium-eating, however, among the dense population of India is not so great as to mark a national evil, and is not used in the systematic way, or nearly to the stupefying extent, that it is in China. It does not appear to be much employed by them curatively beyond the use of the seed-husks—used also for smoking—externally for sprains or tumours. Unlike the datoora, whose

seeds are its poison, the seeds of the poppy are harmless, are used in native confectionery, and their oil in cooking—besides being a well-known article of commerce and adulterative of olive oil ; whereas the milk of the poppy is its active principle, a poison, narcotic, or valuable medicine, according as it is used.

Least hurtful of narcotics, the tobacco-plant, largely grown wherever the soil is rich enough, is universally used over India, and though indigenous to the country, is consumed in much milder forms than at home. In the shape of a paste of mixed spices and charcoal—by some Europeans considered fragrant—it is prepared for the hookah, which, like the calumet of the Red Indians, is socially passed round by the natives while discussing their village news and gossip as they sit circled near their doorways in the evening. But it is more constantly used for eating ; a bit of the dry leaf being powdered in the hand as required, along with a little moist quicklime the size of a pea, is deftly conveyed to the mouth by a jerk of the wrist, and swallowed. In smoking and eating, it is used in a much milder form than even the lightest home tobacco ; the water of the hookah purifies and mellows the smoke ; the leaf as eaten is so dry and crisp, that half its strength is gone ; while the accompanying quicklime is considered counteractive of any harm from the tobacco.

With regard to the medicinal herbs and cures of the natives, they are endless. Hardly a weed grows but they find some virtue in it for some ailment or other. The large leaf of the castor-oil plant heated and applied externally is used for allaying local inflammation and pain ; the leaf and bark of the *neem* tree a well-known and similar valuable appliance ; a small weed like clover gathered among the grass is applied to the temples to allay headaches, or otherwise as a counter-irritant, as we use mustard ; the *chireita*, also a well-known tonic and fever preventive ; the milk of the *chatwan* tree for tooth-stuffing—though little needed in a country where tooth-brushing, like a part of their religion, precedes and follows every meal, and pearly-white teeth are the result, despite the free use of sweet-meats.

During a long residence in the country, I have on many occasions observed and experienced the value of native herbs and medicines. The mention of these to medical men, however, have received but little notice beyond an incredulous smile, or a contemptuous allusion to such 'crude cures.' One out of those coming under my personal notice I may mention. A child of one of my servants that appeared to be dangerously ill of incipient smallpox was given to the old gardener before referred to, to be treated for the disease, a bargain having been struck for a fee payable only on the child's recovery. There was every symptom of a severe attack ; the child's breath was fetid, skin parched, lips and nose seamed and bleeding. The gardener commenced by smearing the child's body over with fresh herbs pounded in goats' milk, and then wrapping him up in a blanket, watched him the whole night, now and again reapplying the herbs and carefully guarding him against cold. The result of his treatment was that in twelve hours

all the dangerous symptoms had disappeared, the child had complete ease, and there was no relapse from rapid convalescence. The free rush of spots that came out soon faded and disappeared. I could hardly imagine that nature, unless aided by these herbs, could work so rapid a change. At the same time, it may be added that, had government taken the home precaution of vaccination, the treatment would probably never have been needed.

### CLOUD AND SUNSHINE IN LANCASHIRE.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

WE wonder if those who have never visited our Lancashire manufacturing towns can possibly, even in imagination, realise the nature of the surroundings amidst which thousands of ‘mill-hands’—boys and girls, men and women—are condemned to pass their lives. The bitter cry of outcast London has stirred the nation to its depths; the voiceless groanings of prosperous yet squalid Lancashire, should they ever find an utterance, would have about them the genuine ring of utter despair. In the metropolis, there are at least light, sunshine, and air, which to one from the cotton districts seems deliciously and, for a town, almost impossibly, pure. The parks with their leafy verdure; the river, flowing grandly by the spacious Thames Embankment; the stately piles of architecture which lie around on every side; museums, picture-galleries, cheap river steamboats—all these facilities for seeing much that is beautiful in nature and art, make the life of a well-to-do metropolitan workman something very different from aught which can be attained by his fellows in our northern manufacturing towns.

Imagine street after street, each uglier than its neighbour, lined with tiny houses in hideous unending uniformity; the only variation being caused by some gigantic many-storied mill with its rows upon rows of windows, and the continuous roar of its mighty machinery; to crown all, a chimney towering high into the air, and belching forth volumes of thick black smoke, which, aided by contributions from scores of similar chimneys, covers the whole place with a gloomy pall, through which the sun's rays but dimly penetrate, Sunday being the only day when blue sky can be seen. In such a town as we are thinking of, the Act which provides for and compels the consumption of smoke is to all intents and purposes a dead letter; and any one who has lived in one of these places—there are many such—knows full well that it is rarely if ever put into operation so far as regards the worst offenders. On rare occasions, some one is made a scapegoat of, to the extent of having to pay a modified penalty; but this practically acts as a license to others, who, knowing that appearances have so far been kept up, feel tolerably safe for some time to come. Put a piece of clean white paper out of doors, and in five minutes it will be black with soot. The very river flowing through the town, and which, rising in the breezy hill-country, should be a pure and health-giving stream, is so polluted by the waste from different chemical works built along its banks, that it is a common saying, when any one falls

in and is rescued, that he might just as well have been left to drown, for he is quite as certain to die, though not perhaps so swiftly, from swallowing some of the filthy water and noxious gases which have converted what was once a trout-stream into a fetid sewer.

Talk of London fogs! Bad though these be, they are at anyrate not surcharged with impurities to the same extent as in these manufacturing towns, where a fog has almost the feeling of solidity, and from whose effects eyes and throat smart unbearably, as though syringed with a weak solution of vitriol. Then, too, these fogs are by no means confined to the winter months. We retain vivid recollections of having to light the gas by half-past five on some June evenings; days which in the country would be radiant with sunshine, but whose brightness was hidden from us by the heavy, impenetrable veil of smoke. How, with so much to contend against, any man or woman manages to keep even a semblance of decency either in house or person, has sometimes struck us as being little short of miraculous. And yet some of them do this to a really wonderful extent, so that you may see the factory lasses going to their work by six o'clock in the morning, looking clean and fresh in their white aprons, with bright-coloured shawls worn over the head and pinned closely about the chest. This, the universal work-a-day headgear in these districts, though to a southerner it has at first a poverty-stricken appearance, is in reality much more sensible than either a bonnet or hat would be, and forms a perfect protection from the biting winds which sweep from across the moors, and are apt to be felt as unpleasantly searching by those who come fresh from the over-heated atmosphere inside a cotton mill.

Then as to health—that, in our sense of the term, is simply unrealisable. Amidst such surroundings, can it be otherwise? The filthy atmosphere too often begets a hopeless despair as regards cleanliness, and paralyses the very springs of effort. Comfortless and untidy homes present a dark contrast to the warmth and brightness offered by the public-house, and literally drive men to the latter; a further craving for drink is induced by imperfect nutrition, the result not so much of poverty, as ignorance of cooking and domestic management on the part of wives and mothers—lack of time also, for most of them work in the mills. The drink demon finds a further ally in the hot and thirst-producing atmosphere of mills and workshops. Thus the chain of causation goes round in never-ending sequence. Its effects are visible in the rickety children with distorted limbs who meet the gaze on every side; women, pallid-faced, and young in years it may be, but who have never known what girlhood means; men, grown old before their time, with bleeding lungs, and puny, stunted frames. This premature ageing is one of the most marked and sadly significant features of the factory population. Returning once to hospital after a brief absence, I made some inquiry respecting a fresh patient, describing her as ‘the elderly woman in bed number seventy-nine.’ Perceiving that the nurse looked somewhat amused, I inquired the reason, and found that she whom on the first glance I had mistaken

for an elderly woman, was in reality not yet twenty-five years of age! Early marriage—sixteen being not at all an unusual age—hard work at the mills, especially at those times when, of all others, the woman needs rest and care; an entire absence of sanitary surroundings both in and out of doors—all these tell their bitter tale, and produce this premature look of age, so that a woman of thirty is old; and by forty, when she ought to be in the plenitude of her powers, has become a withered old woman.

True, there are in London deeper depths than any to be found in the manufacturing districts, where men and women but seldom have to work at starvation prices, and where, except in times of 'strike,' or during the ever memorable 'cotton famine,' there is usually a sufficiency of well-paid employment for all. Indeed, those with the largest families are the best off pecuniarily, for immediately the children get old enough, they are sent to the mill as half-timers, and henceforth regularly contribute their quota to the family income. A London workman and his family, gaining an equal amount in wages, would, however, have far different and very much greater possibilities of health and of rational enjoyment. With an atmosphere which offers no inducement for outdoor recreation, and makes gaslight more cheery than daylight, the dwellers in our smoke-laden factory towns are heavily weighted in the race for health; and the pressure of their outward surroundings—those which result from no act of their own, and, so far as regards any power which they may have, are fixed and unchangeable, constitutes a burden beneath whose constant presence all but the very robust in spirit must sink into hopeless apathy, losing even the wish for, or the ambition of ever attaining to, better things.

Thus, with much of material prosperity, the dark side of the shield more often than not comes into view. We remember talking to a mill-owner about a man in his employ who had been brought into hospital with his hand badly injured as the direct result of carelessness produced by intoxication. The man was tipsy when admitted. It turned out that he and his family took home something like six pounds as their weekly earnings, and could do this regularly; and yet, when a daughter died, their employer had to advance the sum necessary for funeral expenses. Time after time he had tried to induce the man to save; but no! a certain amount would be got together, and then the whole of it drawn out and spent on some 'spree.' 'And really,' this mill-owner continued, with a frankness somewhat unusual, 'I hardly see how we can expect things to be otherwise; the gloomy monotony of our workmen's lives is so intense, that an occasional outbreak must be looked for. In fact, it seems to act as a safety-valve, without which the pressure of forces would be so great as to result in an explosion and terrible social disruption. I myself,' he went on to say, 'could not endure life in such a place even with all the ameliorations which wealth can supply, were it not for a run into the country now and then, or a month abroad, either of which alternatives is a splendid way of letting off the steam.'

The speaker himself was a much younger man than is usually to be found amongst the race of

mill-owners. We could not help wondering whether he, with the rest, would in time get so inured to his surroundings as to accept them with passive acquiescence.

Any stranger walking through the streets at a time when the mills 'loosed,' might well be excused for fancying himself amongst a rude people, their very speech being as an unknown language to him. And yet the horse-play, if a little rough, really means nothing more than does the frolicsomeness of a lot of schoolboys just released from their tasks. We should, however, recommend a very thin-skinned person, or one who stood much upon his dignity, to keep out of the streets at such an hour. You will be certain to hear, unmasked, the whole truth about your personal appearance. The cut of your clothes, your every gesture and feature, will be commented upon; the amusing part being that all this is done without the slightest idea or intention of giving offence. To one who will take these people as they are, such frankness is positively refreshing, and a splendid cure for latent conceit, which has small chance of developing amidst so outspoken a people.

The lady superintendent of a hospital in one of our Lancashire towns where the distinctive characteristics of the people come out even more broadly than usual, told us that at first she hardly knew what to make of such a state of things, and was almost afraid to venture out of doors, for she could neither understand the speech of the people nor make herself understood by them. Being a gentlewoman in every sense of the word, and possessed of much tact, with a strong reserve of common-sense, she soon became a great favourite with the rough men and women by whom she was surrounded, but could never get over the sense of amusement at being now and then stopped in the streets by a knot of mill-girls—all perfect strangers to her, and she to them—and told that she had on a very pretty gown and they would like to know where it was made. 'In London,' she usually had to answer; and would further good-naturedly gratify their curiosity by telling them to take a good look at it, so that they might not forget the way in which it was made. To have felt, or at anyrate shown, annoyance would have been the height of absurdity, as these girls really intended to be complimentary.

There was a story told of two ladies—one an American—who, when walking along one day, heard the comments which were freely passed upon their appearance and attire; some bright buttons which the American lady had on her coat being as a very focus of attraction, and particularly taking the mill-girls' fancy. Foolishly enough, the lady turned round and soundly rated them, with the very unpleasant consequence that she and her companion were followed and hooted at by an ever-increasing crowd of men, women, and children, so that they had at length to take refuge in the police station, which by good fortune chanced to be close at hand. In this case, too, no rudeness had been intended: the girls themselves would have felt pleased for any one to remark upon their clothes, and they could not imagine that for them to do so would be disagreeable to others.

Rough as is their outward appearance, and free

though their manners may be, these girls often show an amount of tact and innate good-breeding which would not disgrace a high-born dame. Their real good-heartedness and utter absence of all self-seeking are as conspicuous as those more obtrusive and less desirable mannerisms which cause a stranger to shrink from them with something like dismay. Nor is it only to their own people that this thoughtful kindness comes out. We remember hearing of a newly-made widow who obtained a situation in Lancashire, and came down from London to enter upon it. Her previous experiences having been entirely confined to south-country life, she had not the least idea of the sort of people amongst whom she would be thrown. Feeling very sad in her utter loneliness, and quite tired with the journey—a longer one in those days as measured by time—she was somewhat alarmed when the carriage-door was opened and a whole bevy of factory girls got in. Their uncouth appearance, boisterous manners, and unintelligible form of speech amazed her. Suddenly one girl turned to her and said: ‘Art starved?’ To this abrupt question, totally misapprehending its import, she managed to stammer out: ‘O no, thank you; I have plenty to eat.’ ‘Who thinks tha means demmed?’ put in another girl. Whereupon the first, in order to render her meaning quite clear, and to show that she did not ask from merely empty curiosity, took off her own shawl—it was a bitterly cold, frosty day—and wrapped it round the stranger. It was a trifling act, perhaps, but showed such hearty good-will as warmed the heart of this poor widow for many a long day.

We wonder what a southerner would make of the following dialogue. A number of ladies and gentlemen walking home from a friend's house one evening, separated into groups, one lady and gentleman being a little in advance of the others. On waiting for their friends at a point where some of the party would have to diverge, these two—who were, as it happened, perfect strangers until that evening—were surprised to see the rest almost convulsed with laughter, but could get no clue to its meaning. The friend with whom the stranger-lady was staying afterwards told her their amusement was caused by some mill-girls, who, not knowing that the different groups were members of one party, freely commented on the first lot in the hearing of the others. Alluding to the lady and her escort, one girl said—it happened that they were all in the gentleman's employ, but he had not noticed them—‘Yon's th' measter?’—‘Ay; but who's her?’ from another girl. Then the first, in a voice expressive of intense scorn, mingled with contemptuous pity for her companion's scant perceptive powers: ‘Dunnot tha see he's gotten?’ A third hereupon chimed in: ‘Ah, I tell thee he'd gotten.’ We venture to think that never was more meaning compressed into fewer words; the interpretation thereof being, that ‘th' measter,’ who was a widower, had taken to himself another wife!

As a rule, hospital life in these manufacturing towns brings us chiefly into contact with the darker phases of humanity. Even here, there are occasional gleams of brightness; but for the most part, one sees the rougher side of life, in its results at least. Hurts received in drunken

brawls constitute a very common form of injury; and on Saturday nights more especially—a dread time this, when the house-surgeon is sure to be roused once or twice before daybreak—a most ordinary and, as to its frequency, very puzzling kind of accident is a broken limb or fractured skull, caused by falling down-stairs when in a state of intoxication. When we learn that in the majority of these poorer houses the stairs are without handrail or any other protection, the mystery is one no longer. Then, too, as might be expected, terrible machinery accidents are fully represented amongst the cases in hospital, so that in one year a doctor sees more out-of-the-way surgical practice than he might do during a lifetime spent in a London hospital. Deeply, nay, entrancingly interesting as these cases are, when regarded from a purely scientific standpoint, they are yet unutterably saddening, as being in too many instances the more or less direct result of drinking habits, which beget a recklessness too often leading to terrible results.

#### VICTUALS IN SCOTLAND IN THE OLDEN TIMES.

In these days, when we read and hear so much about free trade and fair trade, it may not be uninteresting to take a look back to the olden times and see how things were managed then. Our ‘rude forefathers’ were not always a semi-savage or barbarous race, for as early as the times of David I.—more than seven hundred years ago—they had a considerable commerce with other nations, and the trade among themselves was regulated by a carefully drawn-up code of laws. Nor was their food always of a humble kind. They had not only the necessities of life, but they also enjoyed many of its luxuries. The burghs had special privileges granted to them by royal charter. The magistrates were bound to see that the traders acted according to the laws, and those failing to do so were fined by the chamberlain at his *ayre*. Traders were not allowed to interfere with one another's liberties; and the chamberlain had to make a strict examination of all weights and measures. Sellers were to sell to all comers, and were not to keep more than fourpence-worth for their own use during the night.

The prices of the various commodities were fixed by the good men of the town. Besides gray or brown bread, there was the wheat ‘white and well bolted.’ Bakers who did not show their bread in their windows or in the market were fined, and their bread dealt out to the poor folk. Those who had a proper oven could have no more than four servants in their bakehouse—namely, the ‘master, twa servandis, and a knave’ (that is, apprentice). The lord of the oven received each time for his oven, one half-penny; the master, one halfpenny; the two servants, one penny; and the ‘knave,’ one farthing. It was also ordained that bakers and other tradesmen were to sell on credit. Fleshers were to keep good flesh—beef, mutton, or pork,

and to expose it at their windows, so as to be seen of all men. They were to give their services to the burgesses at killing-time—when the latter were in the habit of salting their meat for prolonged use—during which time they were to board with the servants of the burgesses. A butcher was not allowed to be a pastrycook ; and among other matters that the lord chamberlain had to inquire into was whether the cooks prepared their food in a state fit for human use. The sale of fish was subject to the same stringent laws. As to ale, it was ordained that any woman who would brew ale for sale was required to have a sign put up in front of her house ; she was to brew it all the year through according to the custom of the town ; the ale had to be of good quality ; and if she made ‘evil’ ale and be ‘convykkyt,’ she had to pay a fine of eight shillings,\* or ‘thole the laugh of the toun,’ and the ale given to the poor folk and to the brethren of the hospital. No magistrate was allowed to brew ale for sale during his term of office. By a tenure under the monks of Kelso, the brewer was bound to furnish the abbot with beer at a halfpenny a gallon, being half the price charged to other people.

The great monasteries throughout the country possessed large tracts of land, either under cultivation or used for pastoral purposes, and by them were reared cereal and fruit crops of much value, besides numerous flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. The barons paid less attention to agriculture than did their ecclesiastical brethren ; but they lived in splendid style in their baronial halls, and entertained visitors in the most sumptuous manner. In short, Scotland was at that time in a prosperous condition, and continued to be so until the unfortunate death of Alexander III., when the country was plunged into the disastrous war of Independence, and ‘Oure gold wes changyd into lede.’ The blot upon the prosperity of those times was, that the greater portion of the agricultural workers were not free men or women, but slaves. They were bought and sold, sometimes as families, sometimes as individuals, but most frequently they passed from owner to owner with the estates to which they belonged. After the war of Independence, slavery had greatly decreased in rural Scotland.

In olden times, as now, supply and demand had a good deal to do in fixing the prices of the various commodities for sale ; but the legislature paid much attention to the subject. Knowing the aptness of human nature to make the best of any special occasion, the legislature enacted in 1424 that victuals were not to be sold at higher prices during the king’s stay at any place than they had been sold at for ten days previously.

Victuals were ‘richt seaut’ in 1478 ; importation was encouraged, and importers were to be ‘honourably receivit.’ Another season of great distress afterwards came ; there was great want of victuals and other merchandise, arising partly from the circumstance that a large amount of counterfeit money was in circulation, and that it was impossible to know the good from the bad. In 1496 barons, magistrates, and ‘hostellers’

were appointed to fix the prices of victuals, ale, and other necessaries, and workmen who took exorbitant prices were to be punished. Notwithstanding this, we find that some years afterwards prices of craftsmen’s work had doubled and trebled in consequence of the neglect of magistrates to control the deacons of crafts who raised the prices. Reasonable prices were now to be fixed, and hostellers were to charge a reasonable price for dinner and supper. But during this and the following century there were seasons of dearth, and persons buying and holding victuals until there was a dearth were to be punished. A prohibition was made against storing corn until harvest, and old stacks were not to be kept longer than Christmas. Later still, all corn was to be thrashed out before the end of May ; no victual was to be held in the ‘girnel’ more than was necessary for the support of the owner’s household until Michaelmas, the rest to be sold at the market ; all extra had to be sold within nine days, and searchers were appointed. No oxen or sheep were to be sold out of the realm.

In the sixteenth century it was ordained that, to prevent dearth, no white fish were to be ‘packed or peeled’ until the country was supplied ; and later on, the exportation of fish was prohibited. Prelates, barons, and gentlemen were to be served in the sale of wine and salt before others. But while some had difficulty in procuring the food necessary for their proper sustenance, there were others who, like the rich man, seem to have fared sumptuously every day. Hence the legislature, considering that the superfluous cheer partaken of both by small and great men was hurtful not only to their own bodies, but also to the commonwealth, enacted that an archbishop, bishop, or earl was to have at his ‘mess’ but eight dishes of meat ; an abbot, a prior or dean, six dishes ; a baron or freeholder, four ; and a burgess or other ‘substantious’ man, either spiritual or temporal, three ; and but one kind of meat in each dish. This Act, however, was not to strike at Yule, Pasch, patron-days, nor banquets to foreigners ; such banquets to be given only by archbishops, bishops, earls, abbots, deans, barons, and provosts and magistrates of burghs. No lambs were to be killed for three years, except in nobles’ and great barons’ houses ; and none were to kill young rabbits or partridges except gentlemen and nobles with hawks. The dearth increased, and another law was passed regarding the killing of lambs, but on this occasion there was no exception as to the nobles or gentlemen. Keepers of taverns were not to mix old and new wine, nor mix water with their wine, and ale-tasters were sworn to do their duty. Justices were ordered to see that good wholesome beer and ale were brewed ; no salt was to be used in the brewery nor in washing of brewers’ vessels. There was still an increase of the dearth of victuals, and flesh and tallow were not to be exported ; but bread, ale, and aqua vita might be exported to the isles for barter. No one was to keep stacks after the 10th day of July, under pain of confiscation. Flesh was to be eaten four days in the week only ; but the magistrates had the power to grant it to the sick who could not eat fish.

In 1574 the circulation of bad money again

\* The sums mentioned in the above article are in Scots monies, the old Scots money being one-twelfth the value of money sterling.

caused a dearth, in consequence of which victuals were withheld. Five years afterwards, victuals were again 'skant,' and as great quantities of malt were consumed in making aqua vita, it was ordered that none be made from the first day of December till the first day of October following, except earls, barons, or gentlemen of sic degree to make it from their own malt within their own house for themselves and friends. It was found that one cause of the dearth was the keeping of horses at hard meat (corn) all the year through by persons of mean estate. This was prohibited; and only earls, prelates, lords, great barons, members of privy-council, lords of Session, or landed gentry that might spend of their own one thousand marks of yearly rent, all charges deducted, were excepted.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century there was an enactment by the Scottish Privy-Council to check 'the grit wastrie of wyne drukin in tavernis be a number of common artisans and rascall multitude;' and the price of wine in Edinburgh was fixed at six shillings per pint. About this time the common table in the College of Glasgow had two dietaries, one for the 'upper table at which the principal and the four regents were served,' the other for the 'lower table' of the eight bursars. At the upper table there were for breakfast 'ane quhyte braid of ane pund wecht in a sowpe, with the remains of a piece of beif or mutton resting of the former day, with thair pynt of aill amangess them ;' and for dinner, white bread 'with ane dische of brose and ane uther of skink or kail,' boiled beef or mutton, a roast of veal or mutton, with a fowl or rabbit, pigeons or chickens as a second roast, and five choppins of better ale than that commonly sold in the town. The supper was 'siclyke' as the dinner. The bursars had less variety, but a liberal supply, and were allowed a quart of ale among four both at dinner and supper.

In 1644, victuals having become so very scarce that they could not be had except at extraordinary prices, Sir Andrew Hepburn, treasurer of the army, brought the matter before the Estates, and asked for some persons to advise with him as to how victuals were to be procured for the forces. This request was granted. Three years after, the price of victuals had become so much reduced that exportation was permitted; but two years more and a sad change took place. There was a supplication by the Commissioners of the General Assembly as to the condition of the mean and poor people; and in consideration of this, exportation was again prohibited. For several years there was a great scarcity, and in 1698 a national fast was ordered. The harvest of that year became altogether disastrous; there were great winds, rains, and snowstorms, and a great part of the corn could not be cut down, so that in consequence of the want of food people died in the streets and highways, and in some parishes more than half of the inhabitants perished.

Such were some of the experiences of the people in the 'good old times'; and although, within comparatively recent years, there have been periods of depression and scarcity, there can be no doubt that we enjoy in respect to the necessities and luxuries of life many blessings which our fathers never enjoyed.

## THE CITY WAIF.

WEARY and pale, a little child  
Stole softly through the dreary street,  
And evermore he faintly smiled,

As some child-fancy, quaint and sweet,  
Thrilled his young heart with wondrous bliss,  
Holy and calm as angel's kiss.

More eagerly his little feet  
Sped o'er rough stones and reeking flags,  
As wind and rain in fury beat  
On naked limbs and scanty rags,  
While shone a ray of heavenly grace  
Round prayer-clasped hands and wistful face.

'Tis true the world had been unkind,  
That hunger, cold, and cruel blows  
Had been his lot—he did not mind

The brimming cup of earthly woes,  
Since he had heard the 'Preacher' tell  
Of that bright land where angels dwell.

'Neath ragged cap, weird locks of brown  
Strayed o'er wan cheek and mournful brow.  
He sighed : 'O for an angel's crown,  
To clasp these throbbing temples now !'

Then sought with dim appealing eyes  
Some token in the frowning skies.

A pitying hand was kindly laid  
Upon his head. With cheek aglow,  
He trembling shrank, as if afraid  
Of brutal curse or sudden blow ;  
For pitying glance or kindly tone  
His wretched life had seldom known.

'Nay ; do not turn away, poor child !  
But tell me where thy home may be ?

The hour is late, the night is wild,  
Some anxious mother waits for thee.  
From her fond care no longer room.'

'Nay, sir,' he cried : 'Heaven is my home !

'I see its fields of shining light,  
As 'neath some dripping arch I creep ;  
And in that land so calm and bright,  
The little children never weep ;  
But evermore they sweetly rest  
Close to their heavenly Father's breast !

'They never hear fierce curses there  
(O sir, the "Preacher" told us so) ;  
And each a lovely robe may wear,  
Who love "Our Father" here below.  
*It must be true, for I have seen*  
In happy dreams their silvery sheen !

Tears trembled in the strong man's eyes ;  
He sighed : 'Earth's dearest gifts are mine !  
*Thy* treasure lives beyond the skies :

O for such simple faith as thine !'  
More faintly rose that childish prayer,  
'Heaven is my home ; oh, take me there !'

'Heaven is my home !'—Saint Paul's old bell  
Tolled from afar the midnight hour ;

A quivering ray of moonlight fell  
On prayer-clasped hands while Pomp and Power  
Slept calmly on. Why should *they* hear  
The songs of angels hovering near ?

A pitying God alone could see  
That upward glance of rapt delight—  
The spirit struggling to be free,  
And then that spirit's heavenward flight !  
But in the 'Morning News' they read—  
'A little city waif found dead.' FANNY FORRESTER.